

REVIEW OF SAN FRANCISCO TROUBLE BY ROOSEVELT AND METCALF

Metcalfe's Complete Report On Vexed School Question--Comments Of President Roosevelt--Secretary Opposed To Grown Boys Attending Primary Schools But Otherwise Points Follies Of San Franciscans

Washington, Dec. 18.—President Roosevelt today transmitted to Congress Secretary Metcalfe's report on the Japanese situation in California, accompanying it with recommendations of his own. The President's message was as follows:

I inclose herewith for your information the final report made to me personally by Secretary Metcalfe on the situation affecting the Japanese in San Francisco. The report deals with three matters of controversy—first, the exclusion of the Japanese children from the San Francisco schools; second, the boycotting of Japanese restaurants; and, third, acts of violence committed against the Japanese.

As to the first matter, I call your especial attention to the very small number of Japanese children who attend school, to the testimony as to the brightness, cleanliness, and good behavior of these Japanese children in the schools, and to the fact that, owing to their being scattered throughout the city, the requirement for them all to go to one special school is impossible of fulfillment and means that they can not have school facilities. Let me point out further that there would be no objection whatever to excluding from the schools any Japanese on the score of age. It is obviously not desirable that young men should go to school with children. The only point is the exclusion of the children themselves. The number of Japanese children attending the public schools in San Francisco is very small. The Government has already directed that suit be brought to test the constitutionality of the act in question; but my very earnest hope is that such suit will not be necessary, and that as a matter of comity the citizens of San Francisco will refuse to deprive these young Japanese children of education and will permit them to go to the schools.

The question as to the violence against the Japanese is most admirably put by Secretary Metcalfe, and I have nothing to add to his statement. I am confident that, as Secretary Metcalfe says, the overwhelming sentiment of the State of California is for law and order and for protection of the Japanese in their persons and property. Both the chief of police and the acting Mayor of San Francisco assured Secretary Metcalfe that everything possible would be done to protect the Japanese in the city. I authorized and directed Secretary Metcalfe to state that if there was failure to protect persons and property, then the entire power of the Federal Government within the limits of the Constitution would be used promptly and vigorously to enforce the observance of our treaty, the supreme law of the land, which treaty guaranteed to Japanese residents everywhere in the Union full and perfect protection for their persons and property; and to this end everything in my power would be done, and all the forces of the United States, both civil and military, which I could lawfully employ, would be employed. I call especial attention to the concluding sentence of Secretary Metcalfe's report of November 25, 1906.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT.
The White House,
December 18, 1906.

METCALFE'S REPORT

Japanese of Adult Age Attend San Francisco Primary Schools

Secretary Metcalfe's report was as follows:

The President:
I have the honor to submit the following:

In my previous report I said nothing

to the causes leading up to the action of the school board in passing the resolution of October 11, and the effect of such action upon Japanese children, residents of the city of San Francisco, desiring to attend the public schools of that city. A report on this matter will now be made, therefore, and after describing the local public sentiment concerning the recent disturbances with regard to the Japanese, an account will be given, first, of the boycott maintained by the Cooks and Waiters' Union of San Francisco against Japanese restaurants doing business in that city, and, second, of the several cases of assault or injury inflicted upon the persons or property of Japanese residents.

It seems that for several years the Board of Education of San Francisco had been considering the advisability of establishing separate schools for Chinese, Japanese and Korean children, and on May 6, 1905, passed the following resolution:

Resolved, That the Board of Education is determined in its efforts to effect the establishment of separate schools for Chinese and Japanese pupils, not only for the purpose of relieving the congestion at present prevailing in our schools, but also for the higher end that our children should not be placed in any position where their youthful impressions may be affected by association with pupils of the Mongolian race.

And on October 11 the Board passed the following resolution:

Resolved, That in accordance with Article X, Section 1662, of the school law of California, principals are hereby directed to send all Chinese, Japanese or Korean children to the Oriental public school, situated on the south side of Clay street, between Powell and Mason streets, on and after Monday, Oct. 15, 1906.

The action of the Board in the passage of the resolutions of May 6, 1905, and Oct. 11, 1906, was undoubtedly largely influenced by the activity of the Japanese and Korean Exclusion League, an organization formed for the purpose of securing the enactment by the Congress of the United States of a law extending the provisions of the existing Chinese exclusion act so as to exclude Japanese and Koreans. The league claims a membership in the State of California of 78,500, three-fourths of which membership is said to be in the city of San Francisco. The membership is composed almost entirely of members of labor organizations. Section 2, Article 2, of the constitution of the league is as follows:

The league as such shall not adopt any measures of discrimination against any Chinese, Japanese or Koreans, now or hereafter lawfully resident in the United States.

Yet on Oct. 22, 1906, at a meeting of the league held in San Francisco, as reported in the San Francisco Chronicle of Oct. 23, 1906, a resolution was adopted by the league instructing its executive committee to appear before the Board of Education and petition for separate schools for the Mongolian children of San Francisco.

Prior to the action of the league the Board of Education, as I am informed, received many protests from citizens of San Francisco, whose children were attending the public schools, against Japanese being permitted to attend those schools. These protests were mainly against Japanese boys and men ranging from 16 to 22, 23 and 24 years of age attending the primary grades and sitting beside little girls and boys of 7 and 8 years of age. When these complaints became known to Japanese residents, I am informed, that some of the older pupils left the primary grades.

On the day when the order of Oct. 11 went into effect, viz.: Oct. 15, there were attending the public schools of the city of San Francisco 93 Japanese pupils. These pupils were distributed among 23 schools of the primary grade. There are eight grades in the public schools of San Francisco, the first grade being the lowest and the eighth grade going into the High School. Those born in the United States would, of course, under Section

1 of Article XIV of the Constitution of the United States, be citizens of the United States and of the State where they reside, and as such subject to the laws of the nation as well as of the State.

The Secretary gives a table at this point in his report showing that Japanese pupils in San Francisco born in the United States occupy about the same position in the different grades as American children of the same age, while those born in Japan are very much older.

The number of schools in San Francisco prior to April 18, says the Secretary, was 76. Of this number 28 primary or grammar schools and two High Schools were destroyed by fire, and one High School was destroyed by earthquake, leaving 45 schools. Since April 18, 27 temporary structures have been erected, making the total number of school buildings at the present time 72.

The Oriental school, the school set apart for the Chinese, Japanese and Korean children, is in the burned section. There is only one Japanese student attending this school at the present time, and there are no Japanese children attending any of the other public schools. I visited the Oriental school in company with the Japanese Consul and found it to compare favorably with many of the new temporary structures erected in the city. The course of instruction is exactly the same as at the other public schools, and competent teachers are assigned for duty in this school. Nearly all of the pupils attending this school have to be taught the English language.

An examination of the map attached hereto will at once clearly show that it will be absolutely impossible for children residing in the remote sections of the city to attend the Oriental school. The conditions in San Francisco are such, owing to the great conflagration, that it would not be possible even for grown children living at remote distances to attend this school. If the action of the Board stands, then, and if no schools are provided in addition to the one mentioned, it seems that a number of Japanese children will be prevented from attending the public schools and will have to resort to private instruction.

I found the sentiment in the State very strong against Japanese young men attending the primary grades. Many of the people were outspoken in their condemnation of this course, saying that they would take exactly the same stand against American young men of similar ages attending the primary grades. I am frank to say that this objection seems to me a most reasonable one. All of the political parties in the State have inserted in their platform planks in favor of Japanese and Korean exclusion, and on March 7, 1905, the State Legislature passed a joint resolution urging that action be taken by treaty or otherwise to limit and diminish the further immigration of Japanese laborers into the United States.

The press of San Francisco pretty generally upholds the action of the Board of Education. Of the attitude of the more violent and radical newspapers it is unnecessary to speak further than to say that their tone is the usual tone of hostility to "Mongol hordes," and the burden of their claim is that Japanese are no better than Chinese, and that the same reasons which dictated the exclusion of the Chinese call for the exclusion of the Japanese as well.

Many of the foremost educators in the State, on the other hand, are strongly opposed to the action of the San Francisco Board of Education. Japanese are admitted to the University of California, an institution maintained and supported by the State. They are also admitted to, and gladly welcomed at, Stanford University, San Francisco, so far as known, is the only city which has discriminated against Japanese children. I talked

with a number of prominent labor men and they all said that they had no objection to Japanese children attending the primary grades; that they wanted Japanese children now in the United States to have the same school privileges as children of other nations, but that they were unalterably opposed to Japanese young men attending the primary grades.

The objection to Japanese men attending the primary grades could very readily be met by a simple rule limiting the ages of all children attending those grades. All of the teachers with whom I talked while in San Francisco spoke in the highest terms of the Japanese children, saying that they were among the very best of their pupils, cleanly in their person, well behaved, studious and remarkably bright.

The Board of Education of San Francisco declined to rescind its resolution of Oct. 11, claiming that, having established a separate school for Chinese, Japanese and Korean children, the provisions of Section 1662 of the political code became mandatory.

Secretary Metcalfe reviews at some length the details of a boycott which he states was maintained against Japanese restaurant keepers by members of the Cooks and Waiters' Union, and gives a number of statements of Japanese residents relative to assaults that have been made upon them by the lawless element of San Francisco. The Chief of Police of the city of San Francisco, says the Secretary in conclusion, as also the acting Mayor of the city, assured me that everything possible would be done to protect the Japanese subjects in San Francisco, and they urgently requested that all cases of assaults and all violations of law affecting the Japanese be at once reported to the Chief of Police.

I impressed very strongly upon the acting Mayor of the city, as also upon the Chief of Police, the gravity of the situation, and told them that, as officers charged with the enforcement of the law and the protection of property and person, you looked to them to see that all Japanese subjects resident in San Francisco were afforded the full protection guaranteed to them by our treaty with Japan. I also informed them that if the local authorities were not able to cope with the situation, or if they were negligent or derelict in the performance of their duty, then the entire power of the Federal Government within the limits of the Constitution would be used, and used promptly and vigorously, to enforce observance of treaties, which, under the Constitution, are the supreme law of the land, and to secure fit and proper treatment for the people of a great and friendly power while within the territory of the United States.

If, therefore, the police power of San Francisco is not sufficient to meet the situation and guard and protect Japanese residents in San Francisco, to whom under our treaty with Japan we guarantee "full and perfect protection for their persons and property," then, it seems to me, it is clearly the duty of the Federal Government to afford such protection. All considerations which may move a nation, every consideration of duty in the preservation of our treaty obligations, every consideration prompted by 50 years or more of close friendship with the empire of Japan, would unite in demanding, it seems to me, of the United States Government and all its people, the fullest protection and the highest consideration for the subjects of Japan.

Respectfully submitted,
V. H. METCALFE.

FIJI FIRE-WALKERS

A drag full of happy Fijians went singing through the streets of the city this morning. The passengers, bare-headed, bare-footed, and white-robed, were radiant with joy, and their songs, which never ceased, expressed the gladness of their hearts. They were a detachment of the fire-walkers from the island of Begu, near Suva. The party, numbering twenty-six, arrived by the Hanuato this morning, and will leave for Christchurch this evening. In the exhibition grounds they will erect a small saucer-shaped oven, in which large stones will be placed. For two days long will blaze on that pavement, then the wood will be hauled out, and the Fijians will walk on the stones. Their first performance is due next Monday.

The Begans are well-built, stalwart men, but are not so tall as the dancers that passed through here a few weeks ago. With their fuzzy heads, their little red ties, their white cricketer shirts, and scarlet waist-bands, they make a striking picture in the city.

With Mr. H. Griffiths as their guard, the visitors were driven to Newton Park, with a retinue of small boys on bicycles. There the Fijians lightly skipped up the bank, and surrounded the lion's cage. The animal was as much surprised as his visitors. They beamed upon him amiably, and he snuffed upon them horribly.

Mr. Griffiths mentioned that the fire-walkers had enjoyed their trip, and were in raptures over the sights of Wellington. Everything is new to them. This is the first time that they have been out of their native land and naturally they find their surroundings impressive, especially the large buildings and the electric cars.

"They say it is the spirits that save

them from harm when they are walking on the hot stones," stated Mr. Griffiths. "It is said that the white men could do the same thing if they had the faith, but they won't risk it. Any amount have burnt their fingers in trying the heat of the stones. Doctors have all been puzzled. The professors of the New Zealand University who had

been invited to see the display would not be any the wiser."

The fire-walking at Christchurch will be the first performance of the feat outside of Fiji. "Are the Begans confident that they will go through the ordeal safely away from their native heath?" asked the reporter. Mr. Griffiths answered the natives in Fijian and they

nodded their heads and talked volubly. "Very confident," was the reply.

In addition to leaving the Begs' turn-out, the Begans will assist their brethren to war-dances. With a contingent fifty strong, this dancing should not be the least of the attractions at Christchurch.—Evening Post, Wednesday, December 12.

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